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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Substantive session of 1997

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 18 July 1997, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh)
(Vice-President)

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GE.97-63335 (E)

In the absence of Mr. Galuska (Czech Republic), Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

REPORTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES (agenda item 7) (continued) (E/1997/L.23 and Add.1)

(a) ECONOMIC QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS (continued) E/1997/16, 24, 25, 31, 35, 52 and 86)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the various decisions and recommendations contained in the compendium of draft proposals (E/1997/L.23).

The Council adopted the draft decision entitled "Report of the Statistical Commission on its twenty-ninth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the thirtieth session of the Statistical Commission" (Section A.1)

The Council adopted the draft resolution entitled "International migration and development" (Section A.2).

The Council adopted the draft decision entitled "Report of the Commission on Population and Development on its thirtieth session and provisional agenda for the thirty-first session of the Commission" (Section A.2).

The Council adopted the draft resolution entitled "Science and Technology for Development" (Section A.5).

The Council adopted the draft decisions entitled "Election of the members of the Bureau other than the Chairman" and "Report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its third session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fourth session of the Commission" (Section A.5).

The Council adopted the draft resolution entitled "Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods" (Section C).

The Council adopted the recommendations by the Fourteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (E/1997/52, para. 17).

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council wished to approve the convening in May 1988 of the fourteenth meeting of the Group of Experts on

the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance, as recommended in the Secretary-General's report (E/1997/86, para. 75).

It was so decided.

The Council endorsed the recommendations concerning the list of least developed countries contained in the report of the Committee for Development Planning on its thirty-first session (E/1997/35, para. 240), and submitted them to the General Assembly for appropriate action.

REGIONAL COOPERATION (agenda item 10) (continued) (E/1997/5, 40 and Add.1 and 41-45)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft proposals contained in the addendum to the Secretary-General's report on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/1997/40/Add.1).

Economic Commission for Europe

The Council adopted draft decisions I to III entitled "Declaration on the Strengthening of Economic Cooperation in Europe and Plan of Action", "Economic Commission for Europe Recommendation 25, 'Use of the UN/EDIFACT Standard'" and "United Nations Framework Classification for Reserves/Resources: Solid Fuels and Mineral Commodities" (Chapter I, Section A).

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The Council adopted the draft resolution entitled "Restructuring the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific" (Chapter I, Section B).

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Ms. VALLE CAMINO (Cuba) requested that the Council's consideration of the resolution entitled "Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of reform of the United Nations" (Chapter I, Section C) be postponed.

It was so decided.

Economic Commission for Africa

The Council adopted draft resolutions I and II entitled "Reform of the intergovernmental machinery of the Economic Commission for Africa" and "Programme of work and priorities of the Economic Commission for Africa for the biennium 1998-1999" respectively (Chapter I, Section D).

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The Council adopted draft resolutions I to IX entitled I: "Programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1996-1997"; II: "Medium-term plan of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the period 1998-2001"; III: "Programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1998-1999"; IV: "Change in the frequency of the sessions of the Committee on Water Resources of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia"; V: "Establishment of the Committee on Transport of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia"; VI: "Establishment of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the countries of the ESCWA region"; VII: "Progress made in facilitating the relocation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to its permanent headquarters at Beirut"; VIII: "Organizational and programme changes and modifications introduced by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia since 1994" and IX: "Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in 1999 and role of the Commission in the coming century".

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should take note of the reports submitted under the current agenda item, namely, the note by the Secretary-General on reform of the United Nations and its impact on the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/1997/5), the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/1997/40 and Add.1), the summary of the survey of economic and social conditions in Africa, 1996 (E/1997/41), the summary of the economic survey of Europe, 1996 (E/1997/42), the summary of the economic survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1996 (E/1997/43), the summary of the survey of economic and social conditions in Asia and the Pacific, 1997 (E/1997/44), and the summary of the survey of economic and social developments in the ESCWA region, 1996-1997 (E/1997/45).

It was so decided.

Mr. HYNES (Canada) said that his delegation had refrained from raising any objections during the adoption of the various proposals, since it had not wanted to obstruct the commendable reform efforts of the regional commissions, but the lack of any general debate and the expeditious manner in which the proceedings had been conducted called into question the seriousness

of the Council's role in overseeing the work of those commissions. His Government hoped, however, that the Council would continue to monitor the implementation of the reform proposals by the regional commissions in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/227.

The PRESIDENT said that the representative of Canada had raised an important issue. The Council's debate had centred on the Secretary-General's report on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields, (E/1997/40), its addendum containing matters calling for Council action having been ignored. In future, the Council must ensure that the recommendations and decisions of the regional commissions were given due attention. The prime responsibility for doing so rested with the individual delegations.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.